A Study of Children's Behavioural Problems among Single and Both Parents' Family – Interaction Effect of Residential Area

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Abstract: *The present study examines the children's behavioural problems among single and both parents' family - A comparative study. A total of 300 samples were selected randomly for the study. Information was collected from using an instrument Child Behavioural Check List developed by Achenbach and Rescorla (2001). Results of the study revealed significance differences in overall and domain wise children's behavioural problems among single and both parents' family. Residential wise comparisons on over all children's behavioural problems did not show significance differences. However domain wise significant differences were observed in their Withdrawn-Depressed and Attention Problems. Overall interaction effect between types of family and living area of children's differ significantly on behavioural problems, whereas single parent urban children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent rural children's respectively.*

Key Words: *:children's behavioural problem, single parent, both parents.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The main purpose of the present study was to assess the behavioural problem in a sample of children from various schools of rural and urban areas in Mysore district. The term behaviour refers to the way a person responds to a certain situation or experience. Behaviour is affected by temperament, which is made up of an individual's innate and unique expectations, emotions and beliefs. Behaviour can also be influenced by a range of social and environmental factors including parenting practices, gender, exposure to new situations, general life events and relationships with friends and siblings. Most children learn to regulate their reactions and feelings over time in the early years through emotional connections with significant others and learned self-understanding. They use the face, voice and body to communicate their reactions to others. If the child receives appropriate responses then an emotional connection is established which will ensure that the child will learn and development will be enriched. This connection requires the parent or caregivers to help the child balance emotions, feel valued and gain a sense of belonging. Parents or caregivers need to be able to read the emotional responses that infants and toddlers are expressing and to model coping skills for the child (Centre for Community Child Health, 2006)

Behavioural problems in children: When a child's behavioural difficulties are prolonged, extreme and potentially harmful or dangerous this may be a sign that the child is at risk of, or is displaying, a behavioural disorder. Behavioural disorders tend to occur in at least two of the following settings: home, school (or preschool) or social situations. The common clinical term for behaviour of this nature is externalising behaviour. The most common behavioural disorders displayed in children are: Conduct disorder: is a mental disorder diagnosed in childhood or adolescence that presents itself through a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate norms are violated. These behaviours are often referred to as "antisocial behaviours." (Bernstein,2000). Oppositional defiant disorder: a pattern of negative, hostile, and defiant behaviour without the more serious violations of the basic rights of others that are seen in conduct disorder. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); is a mental disorder of the neurodevelopment type (Sroubek et al 2013 & Caroline, 2010). It is characterized by problems paying attention, excessive activity, or difficulty controlling behaviour which is not appropriate for a person's age (APA 2013). These symptoms begin by age six to twelve, are present for more than six months, and cause problems in at least two settings such as school, home, or recreational activities (Dulcan, 2011).

In the context of human society, a family is a group of people affiliated either by recognized birth, by marriage or any other relationship like siblings' families or co-residence. One of the primary functions of the family involves providing a framework for the production and reproduction of persons, biologically and/or socially. This can occur through the sharing of material substances (such as food); the giving and receiving of care and nurture (nurture kinship); jural rights and obligations; and moral and sentimental ties. The term "nuclear family" is commonly used, especially in the United States of America, to refer to conjugal families. A "conjugal" family includes only the husband, the wife, and unmarried children who are not of age. Sociologists distinguish between conjugal families (relatively independent of the kindred of the parents and of other families in general) and nuclear families (which maintain relatively close ties with their kindred). Other family structures, such as blended parents, single parents, and domestic partnerships have begun to challenge the normality of the nuclear family (Schneider and David, 1984).

A **single parent** is an uncoupled individual who shoulders most or all of the day-to-day responsibilities for raising a child or children. A mother is more often the primary caregiver in a single-parent family structure that has arisen due to death of the partner, intentional artificial insemination, divorce or unplanned pregnancy. Historically, death of a partner was a major cause of single parenting (Marriage and Family Encyclopaedia, 2011). Single parenting can also result from the breakup or divorce of coupled parents. Custody battles awarded by the court or rationalized in other terms; determine who the child will spend majority of their time with. In western society in general, following the separation of a heterosexual couples, a child is placed with the primary caregiver, usually the mother, while the secondary caregiver is usually the father (Gingerbread. 2010). Dual parent's family is a family group consisting of two parents (mother and father) and their children (one or more) (*Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011).*

Urban and rural children differ in their demographic characteristics, which, in combination with geographic factors, can affect their health status and access to health care. For instance, children living in rural areas are more vulnerable to death from injuries, are more likely to use tobacco and other substances, and are more likely to be obese than their urban counterparts. Rural families may also not have the same access to health care because health services are not always located nearby. Understanding these potential risks can provide program planners and policy makers with information that can be used to design and target services (UNICEF 2012).

Hakan Usakli (2013) conducted a study on Comparison of Single and Two Parents Children in terms of Behavioural Tendencies. Sample consists of 75 single parent children and 75 two parent children joined in the study. The information were collected using the tool namely Children Action Tendency Scale (CATS) by Deluty, which was adapted to Turkish by Usakli. Result revealed that single parent children are less assertive and more aggressive and submissive than their two parent peers.
Achenbach et al., (1987) in their study determine the degree of consistency between different informants' reports of the behavioural/emotional problems of subjects aged from 1½ to 19 years. Sample consists of 269 in 119 studies for meta-analyses of Pearson between ratings by parents, teachers, mental health workers, observers, peers, and the subjects themselves. The mean between all types of informants were statistically significant. The mean were .60 between similar informants (e.g., pairs of parents), .28 between different types of informants and .22 between subjects and other informants. Correlations were significantly higher for 6- to 11-year-olds than for adolescents, and for under controlled versus over controlled problems, although these differences were not large. The modest correlations between informants indicate that child and adolescent problems are not effectively captured by present-versus-absent judgments of problems. Instead, the variations between reports by different informants argue for assessment in terms of multiple axes designed to reflect the perceived variations in child and adolescent functioning.

Amato & Keith (1991) examined Parental divorce and the well-being of children: A meta-analysis. Meta-analysis involved 92 studies that compared children living in divorced single-parent families with children living in continuously intact families on measures of well-being. Children of divorce scored lower than children in intact families across a variety of outcomes, with the median effect size being .14 of a standard deviation. For some outcomes, methodologically sophisticated studies yielded weaker effect sizes than did other studies. In addition, for some outcomes, more recent studies yielded weaker effect sizes than did studies carried out during earlier decades. Some support was found for theoretical perspectives emphasizing parental absence and economic disadvantage, but the most consistent support was found for a family conflict perspective.

2. OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the present study are as follows: A) to determine the behavioural problem of the children in single parent and both parents' children. B) To assess same residential and different residential variance of behavioural problem among single parent and both parents children.

3. HYPOTHESES:

The following hypotheses were framed for the study: A) behavioural problems differ in single parent and both patent children. B) There will be same residential and different residential or living area will influence on behavioural problem among single parent and both parents' children.

4. METHOD:

Sample

Based on random sampling technique, the overall sample for this study covered 300. Out of them, 150 single parents (rural-75, urbal-75) and 150 both parent (rural-75, urbal-75) were included in this study. Sample was drawn from different private and government schools of Mysore district.

Tools

Socio Demographic Data Sheet: This includes details about types of family (single/both parents) and living area (rural/urban).

Child Behavioural Check List (CBCL)(2001): The checklist of child behaviour was developed by Achenbach and Rescorla (2001), this tool is essentially a parents/teachers report checklist on which a given child is identified. This checklist consists of 113 observable and measurable statements on a child's maladaptive or behavioural problem questions. Each item has to be rated on a Likert scale namely, not true, sometime true and very true, each rated as 0, 1, and 2. This test consists of 9 different sub-areas namely anxious-depression, Withdrawn-Depressed, Somatic Complaints, Social Problems, Thought Problems, Attention Problems, Rule-Breaking Behaviour, Aggressive Behaviour, Other behaviour. The minimum scores of a subject on this scale will be 0 and the maximum possible scores will be 226.

Procedure

After taking permission from the consent authority, subjects were assessed on Child Behavioural Check List (CBCL). Further, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and two way ANOVA.

Family	Residential area	anxious-depression		Withdrawn-Depressed		Somatic Complaints		Social Problems		Thought Problems		Attention Problems		Rule-Breaking Behavior		Aggressive Behavior		Other behavior		total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Single parent	Urban	12.733	3.046	8.093	2.067	10.760	2.598	10.826	2.401	13.866	3.398	10.506	3.006	16.333	3.218	17.906	3.970	16.866	2.960	119.560	9.697
	Rural	11.773	2.979	8.853	2.135	11.746	3.401	9.866	2.937	14.320	3.111	8.813	2.293	15.400	2.899	16.226	3.277	16.186	3.148	115.546	6.674
	Total	12.253	3.041	8.473	2.129	11.253	3.066	10.346	2.717	14.093	3.255	9.660	2.797	15.866	3.088	17.066	3.724	16.526	3.064	117.553	8.536
both parent	Urban	8.213	2.848	4.560	2.094	7.333	3.028	7.360	2.346	11.066	2.606	6.893	2.758	9.573	2.227	9.640	4.135	10.546	3.184	76.333	14.558
	Rural	8.360	2.793	4.286	2.133	6.973	2.187	7.493	2.478	10.200	2.889	6.453	2.309	9.853	2.869	11.746	3.158	10.690	2.833	78.160	11.819
	Total	8.286	2.812	4.773	2.117	7.153	2.638	7.426	2.406	10.633	2.776	6.673	2.544	9.713	2.892	10.693	3.816	10.623	3.004	77.246	11.817
total	Urban	10.473	3.712	6.326	2.728	9.046	3.295	9.093	2.936	12.466	3.329	8.700	3.399	12.953	4.572	13.773	5.789	13.706	4.409	97.946	13.244
	Rural	10.066	3.349	6.920	2.879	9.360	3.722	8.680	2.959	12.260	3.636	7.633	2.581	12.626	4.000	13.986	3.916	13.440	4.062	96.873	24.944
	Total	10.270	3.535	6.623	2.815	9.203	3.513	8.886	2.950	12.363	6.482	8.166	3.059	12.790	4.291	13.880	4.935	13.573	4.234	97.400	21.056
F(Family)df=1, 296		F=138.521 P=0.000		F=231.081 P=0.000		F=156.242 P=0.000		F=98.206 P=0.000		F=98.738 P=0.000		F=98.235 P=0.000		F=319.317 P=0.000		F=227.430 P=0.000		F=284.66 P=0.000		F=994.181 P=0.000	
F(Living area) df=1, 296		F=1.456 P=0.229		F=5.942 P=0.015		F=0.913 P=0.340		F=1.968 P=0.162		F=0.352 P=0.553		F=12.530 P=0.000		F=0.900 P=0.344		F=2.55 P=0.614		F=0.579 P=0.447		F=0.732 P=0.393	
F(interaction) df=1, 296		F=2.695 P=0.102		F=0.495 P=0.494		F=4.214 P=0.041		F=3.44 P=0.65		F=3.593 P=0.059		F=138.521 P=0.038		F=3.104 P=0.079		F=20.07 P=0.000		F=1.139 P=0.239		F=5.218 P=0.023	

Table-1: **Showing the domain wise Behavioural problem of children's score, result of two way ANOVA.**

5. RESULT:

Family and behavioural problems in children's: Two way ANOVA revealed on the whole single and both parent family children differ significantly on behavioral problems scores (F=994.181; P=0.000), whereas single parents children's scores(mean, 117.553) shows more behavioral problems than both parents family children's score (mean, 77.246). Domain wise significant difference were observed between single and both patents family behavioral problem children's such as anxious-depression (F=138.521; P=0.000), Withdrawn-Depressed (F=231.081; P=0.000), Somatic Complaints (F=156.242; P=0.000), Social Problems (F=98.206;P=0.000), Thought Problems(F=98.738; P=0.000), Attention Problems (F=98.235; P=0.000), Rule-Breaking Behavior (F=319.317; P=0.000), Aggressive Behavior (F=227.430; P=0.000), Other behavior (F=284.66; P=0.000), whereas for all the domains single parent family children's shows more behavioral problems than both parent family children's respectively.

Residential area and behavioral problems in children's: Result indicates non-significant difference between rural and urban area of single and both parent family on overall children's behavioural problems with F value of 0.732 and significance level of 0.393. Domain wise significant differences was observed in their score of Withdrawn-Depressed (F=5.942; P=0.015), and Attention Problems (F=12.530; P=0.000). Further mean value of rural children's had more Withdrawn-Depressed (mean 6.920) than urban children respondents' score (mean 6.326). In the case of Attention Problems, urban area children's (mean 8.700) showed to be higher attention problems than rural children's (mean 7.633). Result revealed non-significant difference on the

domains anxious-depression (F=1.456; P=0.229), Somatic Complaints (F=.913; P=0.340), Social Problems (F=1.968; P=0.162), Thought Problems (F=352; P=0.553), Rule-Breaking Behavior (F=900; P=0.344), Aggressive Behavior (F=2.55; P=0.614), and other behavior (F=0.732; P=0.393).

Family, Residential area and behavioural problems in children's: Overall interaction effect between types of family and living area of children's differ significantly on behavioural problems (F=5.218; P=0.023), whereas single parent urban children's shows more behavioural problems (mean, 119.560) than dual parent urban children's (mean, 76.333), and single patent rural children's shows more behavioural problems (mean, 115.546) than dual parent rural children's (mean, 78.160) respectively. Domain wise significant interaction effect were observed between types of family and living area on domain of Somatic Complaints (F=4.214; P=0.041), whereas single patent urban children's shows more Somatic Complaints (mean, 10.760) than dual parent urban children's (mean, 7.333), and single patent rural children's shows more Somatic Complaints (mean, 11.746) than dual parent rural children's (mean, 6.973). other domain such as Thought Problems (F=3593; P=0.059), single parent urban children's shows more Thought Problems (mean, 13.866) than dual parent urban children's (mean, 11.066), and single patent rural children's shows more Thought Problems (mean, 14.320) than dual parent rural children's (mean, 10.200). In the domain of Attention Problems (F=138.521; P=0.038), single patent urban children's shows more Attention Problems (mean, 10.506) than dual parent urban children's (mean, 6.893), and single patent rural children's shows more Attention Problems (mean, 8.813) than dual parent rural children's (mean, 6.453). Domain of Aggressive Behaviour (F=2007; P=0.000) single patent urban children's shows more Aggressive Behaviour (mean, 17.906) than dual parent urban children's (mean, 9.640), and single patent rural children's shows more Aggressive Behaviour (mean, 16.226) than dual parent rural children's (mean, 11.746).

6. DISCUSSION:

The main objective of the current research is to determine the behavioural problem of the children in single parent and both parents' children. The hypothesis states that: 'behavioural problems differ in single parent and both patent children'. Statistical method of descriptive statistics and two way ANOVA has been applied to test the hypothesis. Outcome of the study it was found that overall score of single parent and both parents children's differ significantly in their behavioural problem. Whereas single parents children's shows more behavioral problems than both parents family children's. Domain wise significant difference were observed between single and both patents family children's behavioral problem such as anxious-depression, Withdrawn-Depressed, Somatic Complaints, Social Problems, Thought Problems, Attention Problems, Rule-Breaking Behavior, Aggressive Behavior, Other behavior, whereas for all the domains single parent family children's shows more behavioral problems than both parent family children's respectively. The finding was supported by Harland et al., (2002) reported that children with recent experience of parental unemployment or parental divorce or separation are at a relatively high risk of behavioural and emotional problems as reported by parents. Although relatively high, the risks that were found do not justify restriction of screening for behavioural and emotional problems to these children. Touliatos & Lindholm. (1980). Reported that children from intact homes, those living with mother only had more problems; those with father only, more socialized delinquency; those with mother and stepmother, more problems and socialized delinquency; and those with father and stepmother, more conduct problems.

The second objective of the current research is to assess same residential and different residential variance of behavioural problem among single parent and both parents' children. Hypothesis of the study states that: 'There will be same residential and different residential or living area will influence on behavioural problem among single parent and both parents' children'. Findings of the study revealed non-significant difference between rural and urban area of single and both parent family on overall children's behavioural problems. However domain wise significant differences were observed in their Withdrawn-Depressed and Attention Problems. Further rural children's had more Withdrawn-Depressed than urban children respondents'. In the case of Attention Problems, urban area children are showed to be higher attention problems than rural children's. Result revealed non-significant difference on the domains anxious-depression, Somatic Complaints, Social Problems, Thought Problems, Rule-Breaking Behaviour, Aggressive Behaviour and other behaviour.

Overall interaction effect between types of family and living area of children's differ significantly on behavioural problems, whereas single parent urban children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent rural children's respectively. Domain wise significant interaction effect were observed between types of family and living area on domain of Somatic Complaints, whereas single patent urban children's shows more Somatic Complaints than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more Somatic Complaints than dual parent rural children's. Other domain such as Thought Problems, single parent urban children's shows more Thought Problems than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more Thought Problems than dual parent rural children's. In the domain of Attention Problems, single patent urban children's shows more Attention Problems than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more Attention Problems than dual parent rural children's. Domain of Aggressive Behaviour single patent urban children's shows more Aggressive Behaviour than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more Aggressive Behaviour than dual parent rural children's. A study by Van et al., (2001) reported that Community level of psychotic and psychosis like symptoms may be inextricably linked to the prevalence of psychotic disorder. The prevalence of abnormal mental states that facilitate development to overt psychotic illness increases progressively with level of urbanization.

7. CONCLUSION:

Results of the study revealed significance differences in overall and domain wise children's behavioural problems among single and both parents' family. Residential wise comparisons on over all children's behavioural problems did not show significance differences. However domain wise significant differences were observed in their Withdrawn-Depressed and Attention Problems. Overall interaction effect between types of family and living area of children's differ significantly on behavioural problems, whereas single parent urban children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent urban children's, and single patent rural children's shows more behavioural problems than dual parent rural children's respectively.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS:

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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